Book reviews

Issues in Research with Human Subjects. Symposium 20-21 March, 1978. Pp. 198. No price; single copies available on request from Publications Office, Fogarty International Center, National Institutes of Health, Building 16A, Room 205, Bethesda, MD 20205, USA. 1980.

Research in human subjects is very important. Apart from the study of disease there is now a widespread acceptance of the view that treatment can be shown to be effective only by controlled clinical trials. This brings physicians to give their patients dummy tablets, to deny them active treatment, and to fail to tell them what is going on. What patient would continue to take dummy tablets if he knew what they were? The surface of this important subject is gently stroked but not scratched in this little book, and it is probably good to remind clinical investigators of their moral obligations from time to time. Relations with regulatory authorities are also discussed, and the British investigator will be pleased to know, from an inside source, that the FDA will not reject his 'foreign data' just because they are 'foreign'. They may not be regarded as 'pivotal,' since it appears that 'foreign' investigators are reluctant to supply case records or report forms to support the honesty and integrity of their work. A continued deep suspicion of foreigners, and their work is clearly justified.

Jargon abounds in this publication. Could FDA, for example, give NDA, or could CSM grant NPL in NIH funded REC approved NHLBI CT of BO under HEW regulations using SSN for FECA at RBH? Words do not necessarily help. Once paper concludes that 'multi-centre clinical trials require a synthesis of the scientific method and the precepts of modern management.' Among a few very enjoyable and stimulating contributions is a paper on randomised controlled trials of non-pharmacological treatment. This would be enormously helpful to a young physician who wanted to do some research but could not think of a worthwhile project. Much of what physicians and surgeons do is empirical but could be randomised and documented. Though there is mention of heated discussion following a section on international harmonisation, this book is not particularly exciting, and one can only hope that the meeting from which it arose was better.

E. C. HUSKISSON

Diseases of the Knee Joint. 2nd edn. By I. S. Smillie. Pp. 508. £30.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1980.

Professor Smillie's monograph is an important addition to the already large number of books available on this subject. It is a major contribution to our understanding of this complicated structure and it represents a lifetime's experience; as such it cannot be neglected.

Although primarily intended for orthopaedic surgeons, the contents are of interest to all clinicians and students involved in the examination and treatment of musculo-skeletal disorders. Throughout the book he rightly stresses the importance of history taking in relation to the knee joint, and his description of the examination and investigation of the joint is masterly. The text is amply illustrated and the bibliography extensive, making the work extremely useful as a book of reference. The author sounds the right note of caution on the subject of joint replacement. Operative details are included in sufficient detail to complement the text, which is extremely lucid and readable throughout.

This is a comprehensive and authoritative work on the diseases of the knee joint. It is essential reading for orthopaedic surgeons and trainees and an important work of reference for allied specialists in the field.

A. J. HALL

A Colour Atlas of Clinical Orthopaedics. By Lipmann Kessel. Pp. 175. £22.00. Wolfe Medical Publications: London. 1980.

This beautifully illustrated atlas covers a wealth of clinical orthopaedics in a readily assimilable style. The text, though brief, is pithy and clearly set out in relation to the illustrations, which are all of the highest quality. The pathology illustrated is so florid that one is left in little doubt as to the nature of the disease being described.

Though by no means a complete pictorial survey of the subject, this book is nevertheless a very useful introduction to clinical orthopaedics. It should prove invaluable to medical students, physiotherapists, nurses, and their teachers.

A. J. HALL

Hoists and Their Use. By Christine Tarling. Pp. 318. £8.00. Heinemann: London. 1980.

This excellent book arises from the information obtained by the Hoist Project Advisory Panel set up by the Disabled Living Foundation. This opened its doors to the professions and lay public in 1970. A year later it had become obvious that the hoists caused more difficulties than any other kind of aid. Further, as the author notes, many nurses either had no access to hoists when lifting heavy patients, or disregarded them. Yet backache remains a frequent cause of absenteeism in nursing—and may drive more senior nurses into administration. Many other hospital staff remain at similar risk.

The aims of this book then are to gather together all the available information on hoists and to encourage training in their correct usage. It succeeds admirably. It is well set out and easy to handle, with information

arranged logically, and is considerably enhanced by clear and attractive line drawings by W. Brennan. The reader is not plunged into a mass of detail on individual aids but asked first, Is a hoist really necessary? While few doctors will require detailed knowledge of individual hoists, slings, and accessories, most working with patients with mobility problems would find this chapter a highly readable source of information on transferring and on toileting difficulties and their solution. This information obviously derives from Miss Tarling's experience in the Disabled Living Foundation and the Newcastle Aids Centre, and indicates the value of aids centres. Such advice is not easily obtainable elsewhere. The book deals with the use of hoists in virtually every situation, in hospital, at home, at work, and in transit. It should be available in all departments of rehabilitation, to all who are concerned with the ordering of hoists, and all who must use them, in which case its use should be reinforced by practical training.

M. A. CHAMBERLAIN

Textbook of Rheumatology. Eds. W. N. Kelley, E. D. Harris, S. Ruddy, and C. B. Sledge. Pp. 2054. £56.00, single vol. £67.00, twin vols. W. B. Saunders: Philadelphia. 1981.

'The field of rheumatology', write the 4 highly distinguished editors, 'has come of age. . . . The time has now come for a major new textbook in rheumatology.' Striving for an authoritative, comprehensive reference book, they have indeed produced a massive work, the single volume measuring 11½ inches by 9 inches by 3 inches and weighing nearly 12 lb. No fewer than 124 contributors have written its 2054 pages, made up of 24 major sections divided into 123 chapters. The first 4 sections are general—Scientific Basis of Rheumatology; General Approach to the Patient; Diagnostic Tests; Clinical Pharmacology. Sections 5 to 21 describe the various rheumatological entities. The last 3 sections deal with Medical Orthopaedics, Rehabilitation, and Reconstructive Surgery.

Beyond any doubt we must congratulate the editors on the successful completion of their immense task of design, compilation, and integration, no less than the publishers on the production of a book of very good quality indeed. By present-day standards the price is not excessive.

The disadvantages of the book, from which its sheer size in no way protects it, perhaps the reverse, are those inherent in any multiauthor work. Pursuit of a single entity involves consulting different sections. Thus an overall view of gout will necessitate reading Chapter 21 (Purine and Deoxypurine Metabolism), Chapter 33 (Approach to the Patient with Hyperuricaemia), Chapter 38 (Synovial Fluid Analysis), Chapter 39 (Diagnostic Radiology), Chapter 50 (Nonsteroidal Antirheumatic Drugs), Chapter 56 (Antihyperuricaemic Drugs), Chapter 57 (Colchicine), and Chapter 86 (Gout and Related Disorders of Purine Metabolism). Examples of overlap are not difficult to find, and indeed the editors declare their belief that some repetition is appropriate and

necessary. Minor inconsistencies and omissions are also hardly avoidable. For example, an inquiry into Kashin-Beck disease will reveal on p. 346 that it is due to toxicity by the fungus *Fusarium sporotrichella* but on p. 1542 that it is secondary to iron intake in drinking water. The reader will search in vain for an account of osteonecrosis as a not uncommon complication of systemic lupus erythematosus; it is not mentioned in the chapters on SLE and its management, while it has only a brief mention (though with a reference) in the chapter on osteonecrosis.

It all depends on whether you care for textbooks, big ones in particular. Some will value the book highly as the culmination of reference books in the field of rheumatic diseases. Others may be less enthusiastic, regarding it as a kind of literary dinosaur. Still, dinosaurs were pretty successful in their day, dominating the earth for 140 million years, which gives plenty of time for future editions.

J. T. SCOTT

Prostaglandin Synthetase Inhibitors. Ed. Peter Ramwell. Pp. 420. US\$ 34.00. Alan R. Liss: New York. 1980.

Very substantial advances have been made in understanding the physiology and pharmacology of prostaglandins in the last 10 years. The clinical significance of many of the findings remains uncertain but vigorously suggestive, and is discussed at numerous symposia. The present volume is the proceedings of such a symposium held in Paris in September 1979.

The chapters on arachidonate metabolism and granulomatous inflammation, on prostaglandins and the synovial membrane, and on synthetase inhibitors as therapeutic agents are those most likely to be of interest to rheumatologists. However, a more recent account of anti-inflammatory drugs and arachidonic acid metabolism was given at the Wembley conference on Clinical Pharmacology, held in August 1980, and has already appeared in print, so the present volume is not the most up-to-date account available. Most of the book is concerned with cardiovascular disturbances, renal function and disturbances of pregnancy and childbirth, and gastrointestinal and pulmonary function. It will appeal to those with very broad interests or with special involvement with prostaglandin synthesis, and the information it contains will probably be largely superseded in a few years.

M. WEATHERALL

Mason and Currey's Introduction to Clinical Rheumatology. 3rd edn. Ed. H. L. F. Currey. Pp. 372. £12.95. Pitman Medical: London. 1981.

As a medical student recently completing my time on a rheumatology firm I found this book to be of tremendous value in succinctly describing the diseases seen in the clinics and on the wards. The chapters on the examination of joints and laboratory investigations are indispensable for the undergraduate and in this respect could be better placed at the beginning.